

Fun at Kids Central 57

Mr. Dunn's Instant Pickles



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*P*lop! A drop of sweat fell from Jason's forehead. It landed right on his video game. "Ugh. It's so hot!"

Mr. Dunn pointed at Jason's game. "That needs to go away. We're about to head inside to make some food."

"We're cooking on this hot, hot day?" Jason asked.



"I hope we're not using the oven!" Bobby cried.

Mr. Dunn chuckled. "Don't worry. We're making cold cucumber pickles. Perfect for today."

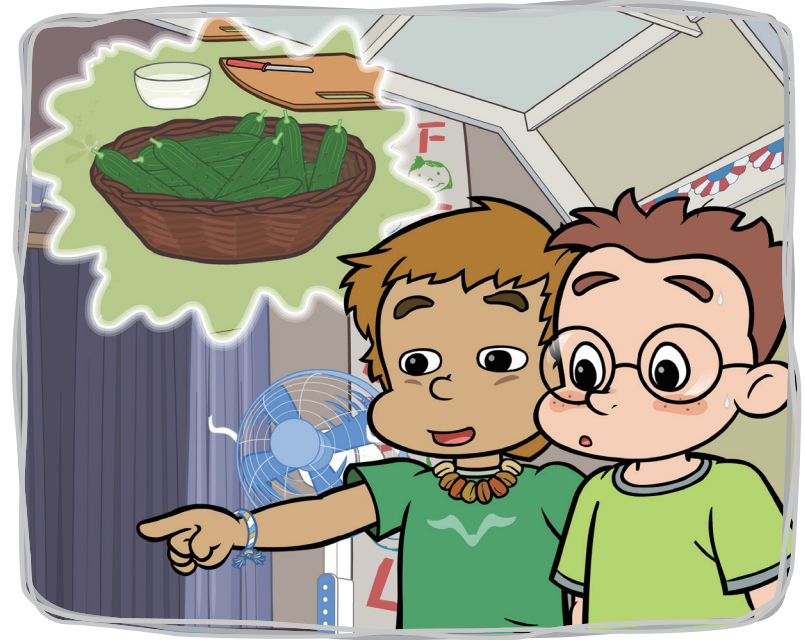
"That's no fun. Pickles have to sit around in jars for a long time. We won't get to eat them today!" Jason frowned.



“We’re making *instant* pickles.” Mr. Dunn winked. “Have you ever made those?”

Jason shook his head.

“We should get started. The process has a few steps. But I promise they’ll be ready to eat by the end of the day.” Mr. Dunn clapped his hands. “It’s pickle time!”

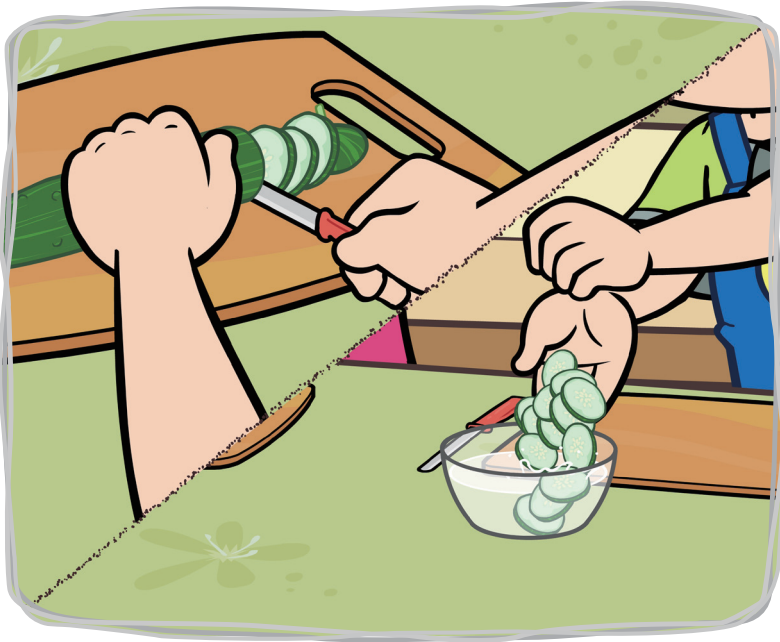


Inside the gym it was still hot. But Jason was glad there was a fan.

“Look at all those cucumbers!” Ethan cried.

“They’re from my garden,” Mr. Dunn said proudly.

“So how do we turn cucumbers into pickles?” Izzie asked.



“First choose a cucumber from the basket,” said Mr. Dunn.

“Yay! We each get our own!” Nina picked the smallest one.

“There’s a cutting board and knife for each of you. Carefully slice your cucumbers as thin as possible. Place the slices in the bowls of salt water,” Mr.

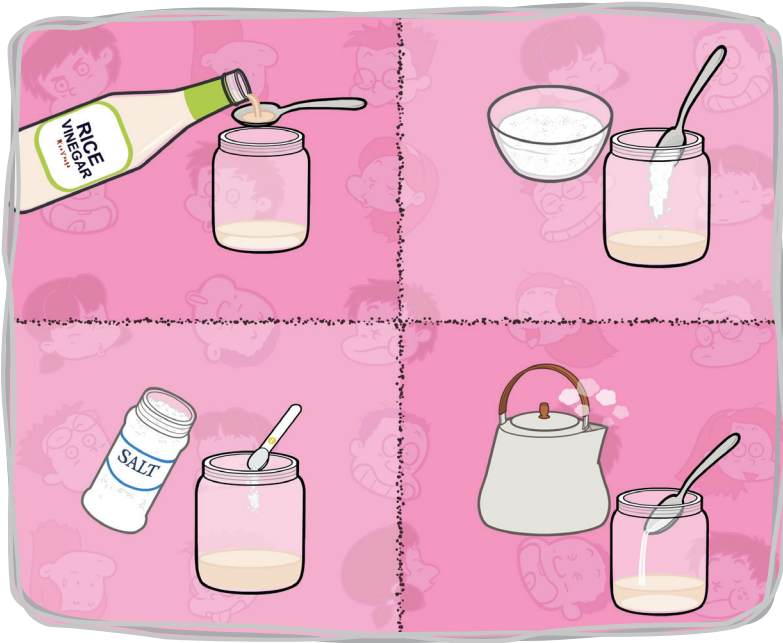


Dunn instructed.

Jason carefully followed the teacher’s instructions.

“We’ll leave our slices there and prepare the pickle juice.” Mr. Dunn motioned for everyone to follow him to the next table.

Nina looked confused.



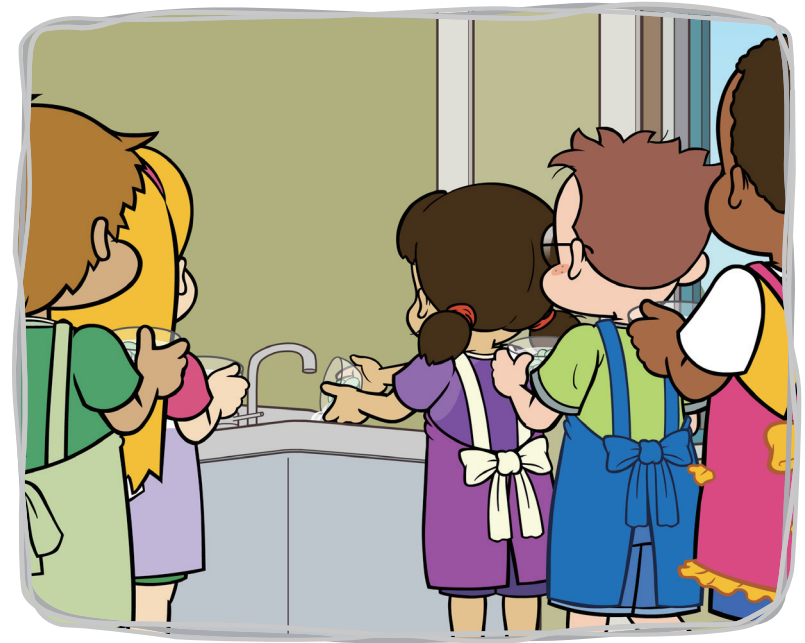
“Pickle juice is the liquid you put pickles in,” Jason whispered.

Nina smiled thankfully.

“The juice is eight tablespoons rice vinegar,” read Bobby.

“And one and a half tablespoons sugar,” Ethan continued.

“Plus one teaspoon salt,” Izzie added.



“And four tablespoons of boiling water!” Nina said.

The kids each made their own jar of pickle juice. When they were done, Mr. Dunn reminded them about their cucumbers. “It’s time to drain them. One at a time now at the sink.”

“Here’s the fun part. Squeeze the extra



water out of the slices with your hands. Just like you're wringing a towel. Grab a bunch and squeeze. Then pat them dry with a paper towel," said Mr. Dunn.

Jason grabbed a handful of cucumber slices and squeezed. The cucumbers felt cold in Jason's hands. It was the first time he felt cool all day. He patted them dry,



and then turned to Mr. Dunn. "Now is it time to put the cucumbers in the pickle juice?" he asked.

Mr. Dunn nodded. "Sure is."

"It's twelve o'clock now. Our pickles will be ready at three." Mr. Dunn looked around at the hot, sweaty faces. "That's just enough time for a quick trip to the air-



conditioned town library.”

“Hooray!” Everyone cheered.

Later the campers returned to the gym. The pickles were waiting. The campers drained the juice and then grabbed forks.

A cold mouthful of pickles tickled as it slid down Jason’s throat. “Yum! Instant pickles are my new favorite food!”

Things You'll Need



**1 medium-sized
cucumber**



1 cup water



1/2 teaspoon salt



paper towels

For the pickle juice:



**8 tablespoons
rice vinegar**



1 teaspoon salt



**1 1/2 tablespoons
sugar**



**4 tablespoons
boiling water**

Do It Yourself



1) Add 1/2 teaspoon salt to 1 cup water.



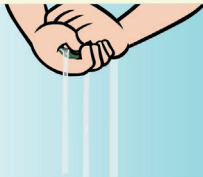
2) Carefully slice a cucumber as thinly as you can.



3) Place the slices in the salt water for 10-20 minutes.



4) Prepare the pickle juice by mixing the rice vinegar, sugar, and salt with boiling water in a bowl.



5) Drain the cucumber slices. Squeeze out excess water and pat dry with a paper towel.



6) Place cucumber slices in the pickle juice and let it sit in the refrigerator for 2-3 hours.



7) Drain the pickle juice and enjoy!